

"Now I wonder if this is genuine?" he muttered; then read the words which were written on the slip of paper in his hand:

"If you want to snaffle the whisky-running outfit be at a spot on the west bank of the Manater River, at a point just opposite where the river branches off, at eight o'clock tonight.

**"One Who Wants Revenge"**

The inspector eyed the missive curiously, then made a gesture of disgust.

"Some cur going back on his pals," he muttered thoughtfully. "At any rate, it's not up to me to blame him, and I suppose I must take advantage of the opportunity. I don't well see what object anyone can have in sending me on a wild-goose chase; but I'll carry this thing through on my own."

He called his orderly, and gave instructions for a fresh horse to be ready for him at once. It was now five o'clock, and the ride before him was at least twelve miles, so he decided to set out and travel leisurely.

By doing this he would have a comparatively fresh horse when he arrived at his destination; and previous experience had taught him what an advantage that would be under certain circumstances which might well arise.

He arrived at his destination with plenty of time to spare, and tethered his horse among a small cluster of pine trees.

It was a brilliant moonlight night, and he was able to take up a position from whence he had a commanding view of the river. But an uncomfortable feeling took possession of him, for it seemed certain that he must be the victim of a hoax.

His trained eye told him that the formation of the country was the last that would be chosen for any enterprise of the sort suggested. The surface of the land was broken by rugged ravines, making it impassable for any wheeled vehicle, while the rocks forming the banks of the broad, swift-flowing stream rose almost perpendicularly from the water.

But as he was there, he determined to wait till the time mentioned in the note, and at least was buoyed up by the knowledge that no one would hear of his escapade.

Suddenly he became aware that a shadowy object had rounded a bend in the river, some distance from where he lay concealed. A moment later and he perceived it was a canoe coming in his direction.

After all, his journey might not have been in vain.

Then he made out another canoe following in the rear of the first. A moment later and two others drew in sight. The frail craft were moving slowly, being evidently heavily laden.

Yet as he watched them gliding silently along he felt that after all he had been hoaxed in some way, for it would be impossible for the cargoes to be landed, on account of the steepness of the rocky banks.

Then a sound fell on his ear which decided the matter he was turning over in his mind.

It was that of a wheeled conveyance on the road on the other side of the river. A moment later he could dimly make out a light